

FAIRBANKS METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

City of Fairbanks, Engineering Conference Room
800 Cushman Street, Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Meeting Minutes
December 2, 2009

1. Call to Order

Todd Boyce called the meeting to order at 12:04 p.m.

2. Introduction of Members and Attendees

The following were present:

- * FMATS Policy Committee members
- ** FMATS Staff members
- *** FMATS Technical Committee members

NAME	REPRESENTING
*** Todd Boyce	sub for Donna Gardino (absent) FMATS
*** Michael Wenstrup	FNSB Planning Commission
*** Jonathan Shambare	UAF Director of Design and Construction
*** Jerry Woods	(absent) Tanana Chiefs Conference
*** Dave Sanches	sub for Michael Meeks (absent) Ft. Wainwright
*** Ethan Birkholz	DOT&PF
*** Bill Butler	City of North Pole
*** Bruce Carr	ARRC
*** Joan Hardesty	ADEC
*** Jim Lee	sub for Bernardo Hernandez (absent) FNSB
*** Mike Schmetzer	City of Fairbanks
*** Bob Pristash	City of Fairbanks
*** Glenn Miller	FNSB
** Margaret Carpenter	DOT&PF
** Tara Callear	FMATS Planner
Gerald Keyse	Resident

3. Public Comment

Mr. Keyse commented on the bus routes and bus shelters. He said the bus shelters need to be improved and that it would be helpful to have a shelter located near the Fred Meyers East. He said that the red and blue routes should improve access to the hospital. He said sign placement is not visible.

4. Approval of the December 2, 2009 Agenda

- **MOTION:** To approve the December 2, 2009 agenda. (Carr/Shambare). None opposed. Approved.

COMMENTS: NONE

5. Approval of the November 4, 2009 Minutes

- **MOTION:** To approve the November 4, 2009 minutes. (Pristash/Birkholz) None opposed. Approved.

COMMENTS: NONE

6. Committee Reports

a. Seasonal Mobility Task Force

Ms. Callear that the Task Force Report is complete and the meeting to review that document will be held December 14 at 2:00 pm in the Council Chambers at City Hall. The Task Force will review the recommendations before bringing them before the Technical Committee for review and comment.

b. Preventive Maintenance (PM) Subcommittee

Mr. Boyce reported that the Subcommittee had met on November 13 and agreed to add \$105.0 to PH2 and \$161.0 to PH 4 of De-ob funding and also move \$125.0 from Chena Pump/Chena Small Tracts to PH 4. He referenced the projects and maps listed in the packet.

- **MOTION:** To recommend to the Policy Committee to approve the FFY10 Preventive Maintenance Program and funding as presented. (Birkholz/Carr) None opposed. Approved.

COMMENTS:

Mr. Carr asked about the Radar Detection Technology. Mr. Pristash explained that it is a traffic management device that is used in place of the in-pavement loop.

c. PM _{2.5} Subcommittee- Agreement Status and Non-attainment designation

Mr. Boyce reported that the Subcommittee met on November 13 and DOT HQs has agreed to develop the draft agreement for handling transportation conformity. They will amend the existing Coordinator's Office MOU. The Subcommittee is still researching the impacts of expanding the MPO boundaries. They recommend waiting on approval of the CMAQ criteria and focus on resolving the conformity responsibility issues first. FMATS has been designated a non-attainment area effective December 14, 2009.

Mr. Miller asked if HQ had responded yet. Mr. Birkholz said that they had not and he said that he does not see that many benefits would result from expanding the boundary. He does not think that simplifying the regulatory aspect of the agreement is reason enough to justify the expansion.

Mr. Birkholz said that DOT is currently working with Sierra Research to work on the Conformity that is due by September 2010. They are working on the traffic model. He will brief the Committee as it progresses.

Ms. Callear said that the discussion at the meeting was complicated and no real conclusions were reached, however it was productive in that it became clear why an agreement was necessary. She agreed to send the memo summarizing the meeting to the Committee.

Mr. Birkholz added that the MOU will define the roles and responsibilities and shared duties. He said that it did become clear what the issues are that need to be addressed in the MOU amendment.

Mr. Carr asked if this would include a boundary expansion. Mr. Birkholz said he does not understand why the boundary expansion is being looked at as a possibility. Ms. Callear said that it is being looked at because the complexity of the agreement that is necessary in order to ensure that the interests of the MPO are being fulfilled. This warrants the investigation into the potential for expanding the boundary because the coordination of the timing of the TIP and the STIP. If one conformity analysis is going to be done to satisfy both the needs of TIP and the

STIP, the potential exists for a delay in the programming of funds for the MPO if the conformity analysis needs do not align with that of the DOT. Based on that level of complexity, the Subcommittee is entertaining the idea of expanding the boundary in case it is a better solution that running the risk of delays.

Mr. Carr said that the MPO boundaries, when established were a great discussion based on population and density. PM 2.5 is a regulatory issue and the boundary was negotiated and has nothing to do with what the purpose of an MPO boundary is. He said he thinks that the arrangement between DOT and the MPO in meeting the regulatory issues is something that can be worked out without changing the boundaries, unless there is a stronger reason to do so. If it came to a vote, he is not sure if he would be in favor of it.

Mr. Butler joined the meeting at 12:15

7. Old Business

a. Bus Shelters Update

Mr. Miller said the FNSB is in the process of drafting a letter requesting the use of an agreement that would be similar to what Anchorage is using for their ROW.

Mr. Birkholz added that the project includes replacing and adding new signs for the bus shelters and stops. The other part is putting in new bus shelters and taking down some of the old ones. He said that there is a list of approximately 36 bus shelters and a only few of them are on non-DOT roads. The previous agreement is stalled at the AG's office to some objections to some of the language. He said that the agreement Anchorage has done is the same except that they had pulled specifics from the Preconstruction Manual and laid them out in the agreement. Mr. Birkholz explained the history of the issue in the interest of the public comment.

8. New Business

a. UAF Tanana Loop – Alumni Drive Roundabout Scoring

Mr. Boyce explained that a project nomination had been received and referenced the nomination form in the packet. The plan was to score the project at the meeting and the scoring criteria are included in the packet.

Mr. Butler said that he is not interested in making the decision on the fly.

Ms. Callear reminded the Committee that the next item on the agenda is to recommend to the Policy Committee to approve the TIP Amendment No. 1 for public comment. In order for this project to be inserted into the TIP as part of this amendment the project would need to be scored at this time.

Mr. Schmetzer said that it probably does not matter if the project is inserted in the TIP in this amendment because it is not going to move forward that quickly. Mr. Birkholz added that there will likely be another amendment later in the year.

Ms. Callear said that Ms. Gardino was adding it to the agenda in the interest of the nominator, UAF. Mr. Shambare agreed saying that the University would like to see it considered for this amendment because it would help with the overall planning.

Mr. Schmetzer said that whether it is added to the TIP now or in 6 months, it is probably not going to see money soon. Mr. Shambare said that he understands that.

Mr. Pristash asked where the funds came from the last time that intersection was constructed. Mr. Shambare said that he is not sure.

Mr. Birkholz asked if the University has considered funding the design of the project and getting it shelf-ready for FMATS construction funding. Mr. Shambare said that this is a possibility. Mr. Birkholz said that this would accelerate the project. Mr. Shambare said that it is a safety issue as well as it supports east/west travel.

Mr. Carr asked about the ADT indicated on the nomination form and asked if there is an average recommended ADT for one lane versus two lane roundabout. Mr. Pristash said it is also dependant on the number of legs coming in to the intersection. Mr. Carr said he is questioning if a single lane is sufficient for the 8000 ADT estimated as it would not be evenly distributed over 24 hours.

Mr. Shambare said that many people that are not going to the University use this route for east/west travel. Mr. Birkholz added that most of the traffic during rush hour is east/west. There may be options to simplify it based on this fact.

Mr. Schmetzer said that he believes that the cost estimate may be too high by as much as 1.5 times.

Mr. Pristash added that the estimate stated on the nomination is a good portion of the FMATS annual budget. He said he recognizes that it is not part of the criteria, but could affect it getting funded. Ms. Callear asked if it was worth taking into consideration how that figure would change if the University were to take on the cost of the design. Mr. Birkholz said that if it came out that the estimate was much lower as a result, it would be a big plus. He said it would also help move it up in the TIP.

Mr. Carr asked who owns the road. Mr. Birkholz said it is a UAF road, but it can be funded. Mr. Carr said that he can understand it being funded by FMATS if it is used by public. Mr. Shambare said that it is. Mr. Carr reemphasized the benefit of UAF taking on the cost of design because he would not feel comfortable adding it to the TIP at the current estimate.

Mr. Carr said that he would rather not score it today and asked if a 30 day delay would slow down the University's progress. Mr. Shambare said it would not.

Mr. Pristash recognized that the intersection was built in 1964, but suggested that it was reconfigured in the past five years to accommodate the current needs. Mr. Shambare said it was an unsuccessful attempt to try and improve it.

Mr. Sanches asked if the University has submitted this project in their own capital improvement program. Mr. Shambare said yes, and he does not know where it is in the priorities.

Mr. Boyce asked the Committee if they would like to postpone action until the next meeting. The Committee agreed. Ms. Callear asked Mr. Shambare to communicate the information requested by the Committee, which could be shared via email prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Carr pointed out the response on the Maintenance and Condition section of the nomination and noted that if the response is compared to the scoring criteria, it does not score well.

Mr. Schmetzer asked about the Special Considerations section of the scoring criteria. The Committee discussed the history of this criteria and the possibility that it is more of a policy type consideration rather than a technical consideration. Mr. Schmetzer said that the group should decide how to handle this criterion because there is a potential to slant projects.

Ms. Callear noted that under the Special Consideration section it mentions economic development. She said that the economic development can be discussed from a technical standpoint when determining the value of a project, for example looking at the ADT of Cushman Street to determine its impact on economic development.

Mr. Carr said that by the time the projects reach the Policy Committee the projects have already been ranked. He said that it is his opinion that the Technical Committee is grounded in its technical analysis of the project and scores from that. The Policy Committee should make decisions if a project should move up based on non-technical considerations. He recommended removing the Special Consideration criteria from the technical analysis; it is a political analysis.

Mr. Pristash asked about the utility conflict resolution, which is also technical. Mr. Carr recommended that it be included in another criteria; however, when discussing economic development of a region or safety and security, he questioned being able to technically evaluate that.

Mr. Birkholz said that the intent was to group together those items that were not addressed in the other criteria.

Mr. Butler asked how changing the criteria would affect those projects already scored. Mr. Carr said he is not suggesting that the criteria change now.

Ms. Callear said that it is worth considering revising the criteria, rather than eliminating the Special Considerations, in order to pull out the technical items such as economic development and utility conflict resolution. Economic development is tied to the organizational goal of adhering to Smart Growth principals. Mr. Carr said that revising the criteria will require rescoring all of the projects.

The Committee agreed to score the project once new information is provided by UAF.

b. 2010-2013 TIP Amendment No. 1

Mr. Birkholz explained the amendment according to the summary of changes as presented in the packet.

- **MOTION:** To recommend to the Policy Committee to approve the Draft 2010-2013 TIP Amendment No. 1, with administrative changes, for an extended public review (Hernandez/Schmetzer). None opposed. Approved.

COMMENTS:
NONE

c. LED Street Light Project Funding Request

Mr. Schmetzer said that the LED Project design was completed in September and the bid has been delayed by DOT two times and will likely be delayed a third time due to the procurement process.

Mr. Birkholz said that the issue has to do with sole source procurement.

Mr. Schmetzer said that the problem is that the various manufacturers claim to have the desirable specifications, however many of them cannot deliver on these claims. At one point there was only one manufacturer that could provide a performance spec. Now there are two or three that may be close. The design budget is low and they may be requesting more funding for this project.

9. Public Comment Period

Mr. Keyse asked about the potential for an overpass with on/off ramps as an alternative to the nominated roundabout at Tanana Drive. He also asked if in the suburbs of the city if stop lights could replace stop signs due to lack of visibility due to brush and other obstacles.

10. Other Issues

a. FMATS Technical Committee Meeting Location Change

Mr. Boyce reminded the Committee that the 2010 Technical Committee Meetings will be held in Council Chambers.

b. Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force Meeting

Mr. Miller reminded the Committee that the Governor's Coordinated Transportation Task Force will be meeting on Friday, December 11, 2009 and an agenda will be sent via email.

c. Railroad Northern Rail Extension Public Meeting

Mr. Carr announced that there will be a meeting December 2, 2009 in North Pole from 5-8 pm at the new hotel in North Pole.

11. Informational Items

a. Policy Committee Action Items from November 24, 2009

Mr. Boyce referenced the action items included in the packet.

b. Status of the 2010-2013 STIP

Mr. Birkholz said that the STIP is with FHWA since last week. Mr. Carr asked if it was about 3 weeks late getting there. Mr. Birkholz said probably. He said that FHWA had written a letter and some comments had to be addressed. Mr. Carr asked if any of that had to do with transit. Mr. Birkholz said he did not know.

12. Adjourn

- **Motion to adjourn.** (Sanches/Hardesty) None opposed. Approved. Meeting adjourned at 1:25 pm.

The next scheduled Technical Committee Meeting is January 6, 2010, at Noon at City Hall, in the City Council Chambers.

Approved:


Donna Gardino, Chair
FMATS Technical Committee

Date:

1/6/10